

Ventura County Sheriff's Office
Ventura County SD Policy Manual

AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READERS (ALPRs)

427.6 PRIVACY STATEMENT & POLICY

The Policy of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing the established privacy rights of the public.

All data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of this department. Because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open, nor available, to the public for review.

427.7 RELEASING ALPR DATA

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office shares ALPR data with other law enforcement agencies upon the execution of an inter-agency agreement by which each agency agrees that all ALPR data will be gathered, accessed, utilized and disclosed in accordance with applicable law. Each agency, by way of the agreement, further commits to the following;

- (a) ALPR data shall only be accessible to authorized users for legitimate purposes.
- (b) Audits shall be conducted and maintained by each agency as defined by their department's policy.

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office does not share ALPR data with commercial or private entities.

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- (b) Only designated staff engaged in official duties, conducting audits of ALPR, or database maintenance will have access to ALPR data.
- (c) An ALPR shall only be used for official and legitimate law enforcement business.
- (d) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.
- (e) While an ALPR may be used to canvass license plates around any crime scene, particular consideration should be given to using ALPR-equipped cars to canvass areas around homicides, shootings and other major incidents. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR system in an attempt to identify suspect vehicles.
- (f) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department approved training.
- (g) No ALPR operator may access department, state or federal data unless authorized to do so.
- (h) Deputies shall visually verify the vehicle's license plate to ensure the ALPR read the plate correctly. Deputies shall confirm the alert/want is still active with Sheriff's Dispatch prior to stopping a vehicle based upon the LPR alert alone.
- (i) In the event that an ALPR misreads a license plate, the operator of that system shall notify the Crime Analysis Unit to correct the data. The Crime Analysis Unit is charged with correcting data errors.

427.3 ALPR DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

The ALPR Server will be set to retain data for five (5) years, unless it is being used for a criminal or civil action. When data is retained for this purpose the data shall be maintained until the disposition of the case, including any appeal or administrative due process periods. In these circumstances the data should be removed from the server and stored on portable media and appropriately booked/retained.

427.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of the stored data:

- (a) All stored ALPR data shall only be accessible through a login/password-protected process capable of documenting all access to the information by user, date and time (Civil Code Section 1798.90.52)
- (b) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis.

427.5 TRAINING

The ALPR oversight manager shall ensure that employees receive department-approved training to use or access the ALPR system (Civil Code Section 1798.90.51 & 1798.90.53).

AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READERS (ALPRs)

427.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this usage and privacy policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage and use of digital data obtained through the use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology.

ALPR technology allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office to convert data associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates and missing persons. It may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

427.1.1 ADMINISTRATION

All installations and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Patrol Services Assistant Sheriff. The Patrol Services Assistant Sheriff will assign personnel to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

The Professional Standards Captain, in conjunction with the ALPR oversight manager, shall be responsible for developing guidelines and procedures to comply with the requirements of Civil Code Section 1798.90.5 This shall include:

- (a) A description of the job title or other designation of the employees and independent contractors who are authorized to use or access the ALPR system or to collect ALPR information.
- (b) Training requirements for authorized users.
- (c) A description of how the ALPR system will be monitored to ensure the security of the information and compliance with applicable privacy laws.
- (d) Procedures for system operators to maintain records of access in compliance with Civil Code Section 1798.90.52.
- (e) The title and name of the current designee overseeing the ALPR operation.
- (f) Ensuring retention and destruction of ALPR data is compliant with the records retention policy.
- (g) Ensuring this policy and related procedures are posted on the department's website.

427.2 ALPR OPERATION

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department personnel shall not use, or allow other to use, the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose. (Civil Code Section 1798.90.51 & 1798.90.53):

- (a) Designated Sworn and Professional staff trained on the use of ALPR may gather data using this technology.